Memorandum Letter Submitted via Email to the G20 Summit 2025 Presidency by the Sahayatra International Alliance for Social Justice

Subject: **Advancing Solidarity, Equality, and Sustainability Through Global Action on Caste- and Descent-Based Discrimination**
From: **info sahayatra** <info@sahayatraintl.com>
Date: Fri, Nov 21, 2025 at 8:16 AM
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21 November 2025

To:
G20 Summit Presidency 2025
Johannesburg, Republic of South Africa
Via: G20socialsummit@dirco.gov.za

Your Excellency,

It is with deep respect that we extend our sincere greetings to the Government of South Africa as it prepares to host the historic G20 Summit in Johannesburg on 22–23 November 2025. This being the first time the G20 convenes on African soil, it is a moment of profound symbolic and political significance, especially in light of South Africa's legacy in confronting structural inequality and apartheid, and its current leadership in championing human dignity.

As you advance the Summit's core priorities of **diversity**, **equity**, **inclusion**, and **climate justice** under the unifying theme of **"Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability,"** we at Sahayatra International Alliance respectfully urge the Presidency to integrate a critical but often marginalized human-rights issue into the G20's agenda: the global elimination of caste- and descent-based discrimination.

1. The Durban Legacy: Caste as a Structural, Race-Plus Challenge

South Africa holds a moral and historical mandate on this issue. The 2001 World Conference Against Racism (Durban) not only condemned racism and xenophobia, but explicitly recognized **descent-based discrimination** — including caste — as a form of systemic injustice. Scholarly works (e.g., *Remnants of Durban: Towards a Critical*

Philosophy of Caste and Race) have shown how the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action elevated caste discrimination to the international stage, calling for reforms in education, social policy, and structural inclusion.

This G20 Summit offers an opportunity to revive that legacy: to reconnect Durban's vision of "race-plus" justice with economic governance, and to commit to dismantling inherited hierarchies that perpetuate exclusion.

2. The Toronto Declaration 2025: A Global Call to Action

At the **Global Conference for a Caste-Free World** in Toronto (May 2025), civil society adopted the **Toronto Declaration (TORONTO DECLARATION.pdf)**, which offers a comprehensive global strategy against caste and descent-based discrimination. Its key Calls to Action include:

- Legal recognition of caste discrimination at the same level as racial discrimination.
- Integration of caste as a protected ground in constitutions and national equality legislation.
- Education reform: anti-caste curricula, public awareness, and critical caste theory.
- Institutional mechanisms: such as a **Global Caste Discrimination Index**.
- Reparative justice: including community empowerment, land reform, and political representation.
- Partnerships: especially with international bodies, including the G20, to champion caste justice.

These calls resonate powerfully with the Summit's ambition for inclusive development and social equity.

3. Intersecting Inequalities: Insights from the G20 Global Inequality Report

The **G20 Global Inequality Report**, submitted by the Extraordinary Committee chaired by Nobel Laureate Joseph Stiglitz, provides a timely and indispensable backdrop for understanding caste injustice in the broader landscape of global inequality. Key findings include:

1. **Inequality Emergency**
    - The report warns of a growing *inequality emergency*. As noted, the richest 1% of the global population captured **41% of all new wealth** between 2000 and 2024, while the bottom 50% saw only a 1% increase.

    - This concentration of wealth undermines social cohesion, democratic stability, and economic sustainability.

2. **Prevalence of High Inequality**
    - According to the report, **83% of countries**, accounting for **90% of the world's population**, now meet the World Bank's definition of *high inequality*.
    - These highly unequal societies are more susceptible to democratic decline.
3. **Intergenerational Wealth Transfer**
    - The report projects that **USD 70 trillion** of inherited wealth will be transferred in the next decade — a structural threat to social mobility, equality of opportunity, and justice.
4. **Policy Recommendations Aligned With Caste Justice**
    - The Committee calls for **reforming international tax rules**, enhancing fair taxation of multinationals and the ultra-wealthy.
    - It highlights the need to **reduce corporate concentration**, strengthen pro-worker regulation, and invest in public services.
    - Crucially, it proposes the establishment of a new **International Panel on Inequality**, modeled after the IPCC, to monitor global inequality, assess its drivers, and recommend coordinated policies.

4. Why the G20 Must Act Now — A Caste-Justice Imperative

a) Synergy With the G20 Presidency Theme

- **Solidarity**: Addressing caste-based discrimination advances solidarity by challenging inherited divides rooted in birth, not merit.
- **Equality**: It demands structural reforms that dismantle ascriptive hierarchies, ensuring that individuals are not denied opportunity because of ancestral status.
- **Sustainability**: Without justice and inclusion, sustainable development is hollow. Caste-based exclusion undermines people's capacity to participate fully in social, economic, and environmental life.

b) Intersectionality of Inequality

The G20 report underscores that wealth and income inequality are deeply entangled with power, political voice, and inherited privilege. Caste discrimination is not a peripheral issue

— it compounds these inequalities, and intersects with race, ethnicity, gender, and class. An inclusive global strategy must acknowledge these overlapping realities.

c) Leveraging G20 Influence

Caste-affected populations are present among G20 nations, and in diaspora communities. Through its convening power, the G20 can lead on:

1. Setting normative frameworks (inclusion of caste in anti-discrimination law)
2. Supporting data, monitoring, and accountability (e.g., caste indices)
3. Mobilizing international cooperation (tax justice, trade reform, capacity-building)
4. Channeling financial and technical support toward caste-oppressed communities

5. Policy Recommendations for the G20 Johannesburg Summit Communiqué

In light of the above, we respectfully propose that G20 leaders include the following in the Summit's final Communiqué:

1. **Explicit acknowledgement** that caste- and descent-based discrimination are structural forms of inequality, consistent with the Durban Declaration and aligned with the G20's inequality agenda.
2. **Commitment to support the Toronto Declaration's Global Strategic Agenda**, including legal protection, education reform, and reparative justice for caste-oppressed communities.
3. **Endorsement of a new International Panel on Inequality**, as recommended by the G20 report, with a mandate to monitor caste-based as well as economic inequality globally.
4. **Policy coordination**: Encourage G20 working groups to explore tax reform, anti-monopoly measures, and international cooperation in a way that addresses the systemic exclusion of caste-affected populations.
5. **Strengthening civil society partnerships**, particularly with caste-oppressed and descent-affected organizations, to ensure their voices are integral in designing, implementing, and monitoring inequality interventions.

6. Closing Reflection

Johannesburg, a city of resilience, resistance, and renewal, offers a unique moment for the G20 to reaffirm the world's commitment to justice — not only in climate, debt, and development, but in the very structures that produce human inequality.

By linking the **Durban legacy of descent-based justice**, the **Toronto Declaration's visionary agenda**, and the **urgent findings of the G20 Global Inequality Report**, the South African Presidency can catalyze a historic turning point: embedding caste justice within global economic governance.

We thank you sincerely for your leadership and for considering these reflections. We remain ready to contribute further, provide data, or convene community voices in support of this mission.

Yours sincerely,

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Chair, Global Conference for a Caste-Free World 2025, Toronto

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--Sahayatra International